

From: Marcus L. Pittman, III, M.D. [mailto:MPittman@PittmanBroadcasting.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 10, 2007 9:23 PM
To: Carolyn Williams
Subject: Post-Katrina Recommendations

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

06-119

DATE: May 10, 2007

TO: Carolyn Williams- FCC

RE: Post-Katrina Recommendations

Dear Ms. Williams:

I appreciate the link to the report and recommendations on the post-Katrina panel. However, I am disappointed in the immense effort expended on this project with no realistic recommendations to prevent such problems recurring

I had two stations damaged in Hurricane Katrina, and lost three more in Hurricane Rita. Although I was insured, I have yet to be compensated by my insurance carrier. The SBA just paid on a fraction of our loss, because they don't loan to the broadcast industry.

In each hurricane I was able to get emergency broadcast information to the public within 24 hours after the damage. Following Hurricane Katrina, there was no radio station covering St. Tammany Parish with emergency information (my stations were on too low power to reach). The above attached Times-Picayune article describes my success in putting a station on in that community by "Frankensteining" that equipment with the damaged equipment from my stations in Franklinton, LA. We recorded emergency information on my laptop, burned it to a rewritable compact disc, then looped the CD on a cheap boom box with a CD player that we found. The station was powered by my own home's generator.

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, I recognized that there was no radio station dedicated to St. Bernard Parish. I designed a 50 kilowatt station for that purpose, and revealed by plans to the St. Bernard Parish Council after Hurricane Katrina (see attached City Business article). The Parish Council held open meetings on a dirt floor of their gutted building. I thought that I could bring some hope to a community which was utterly devastated by the storm. Unfortunately, I was far off on my estimate in bringing the station online by the 2006 hurricane season.

Because of concerns of putting so much equipment below sea level and FCC engineering delays, I redesigned the station so it would be 220 feet above sea level and 60 miles North of St. Bernard Parish (see 50 Kw upgrade). That construction permit was granted by the FCC on March 22, 2007. A link with the St. Tammany Parish Emergency Operations Center will allow us continuous contact with that area in the event of another disaster. Unfortunately, I have been unsuccessful in finding financing for the project, so I doubt I will make the 2007 hurricane season.

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As far as the radio broadcast industry is concerned, these are the recommendations that I would make to insure the capability of having emergency broadcasts during an emergency:

- Each FM station should have an emergency 100 exciter and a coupler to connect the exciter directly to the FM antenna line. This will allow the transmitter to be bypassed in the event of major damage to the studios and still broadcast with as little as a 500 watt generator. My stations (WUUU-FM and WOMN-AM) were hit by a tornado which destroyed most of our equipment, but I had an extra exciter and was still able to broadcast a signal of 20 miles in radius to provide emergency information to the community.
- Each AM station should have at least a 250 watt backup transmitter. Even at 250 watts an AM signal will cover a licensed community well in a disaster.
- Each broadcast facility should have a 500 watt gasoline generator in addition to a larger diesel or LP/gasoline generator. This will increase the chance of fuel availability, as well as extend available fuel for a longer time by utilizing the 500 watt generator.
- Each broadcast facility should have a designated disaster plan that includes personnel as well as food, water, emergency supplies, etc.
- Each broadcast facility should be linked by STL, dedicated DSL, T1 lines, or Marti to the local Emergency Operations Center. Personnel should be assigned to those facilities to collect and distribute emergency information on-air.
- Each broadcast facility should have a computer with a program to burn CD's, as well as supply of CD's or rewritable CD's. Personnel should be trained to record and produce 20 - 30 minute broadcasts which can be looped on a CD player or computer. This will allow the limited emergency broadcast personnel to rest for a few hours, while still broadcasting emergency information.

Broadcasting during a disaster is not a profitable venture. Those businesses that are open, are so busy they don't want to advertise. Those businesses that are closed, don't need to advertise. Those were the reasons why so many stations remained silent post-Katrina, and why so many broadcast employees were fired.

'Localism' doesn't work in an industry where most of the owners are 'absentee landlords'. There has to be a commitment to a community, and that commitment has to be backed up with severe consequences for failing to provide emergency information to the public. The FCC clearly demonstrated after Hurricane Katrina that there are no consequences in failing to resume broadcasting in a timely fashion.

I hope that you find this information helpful. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Marcus L. Pittman, III, M.D

PITTMAN BROADCASTING SERVICES, LLC

307 South Jefferson Avenue

Covington, Louisiana 70433

(985) 892-3661 - FAX 892-3372

MPittman@PittmanBroadcasting.com

Northshore / New Orleans: WUUU-FM 98.9

WOMN-AM 1110

COUNTRY

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN

Lafayette, LA: KFXZ-FM 105.9 KKSJ-FM 106.3 KVOL-AM 1330 KFXZ-AM
1520

COUNTRY LEGENDS SMOOTH JAZZ

NEWS/TALK

FOX

SPORTS

New Orleans CITYBUSINESS

November 28, 2005

Doctor seeks license for Chalmette radio station

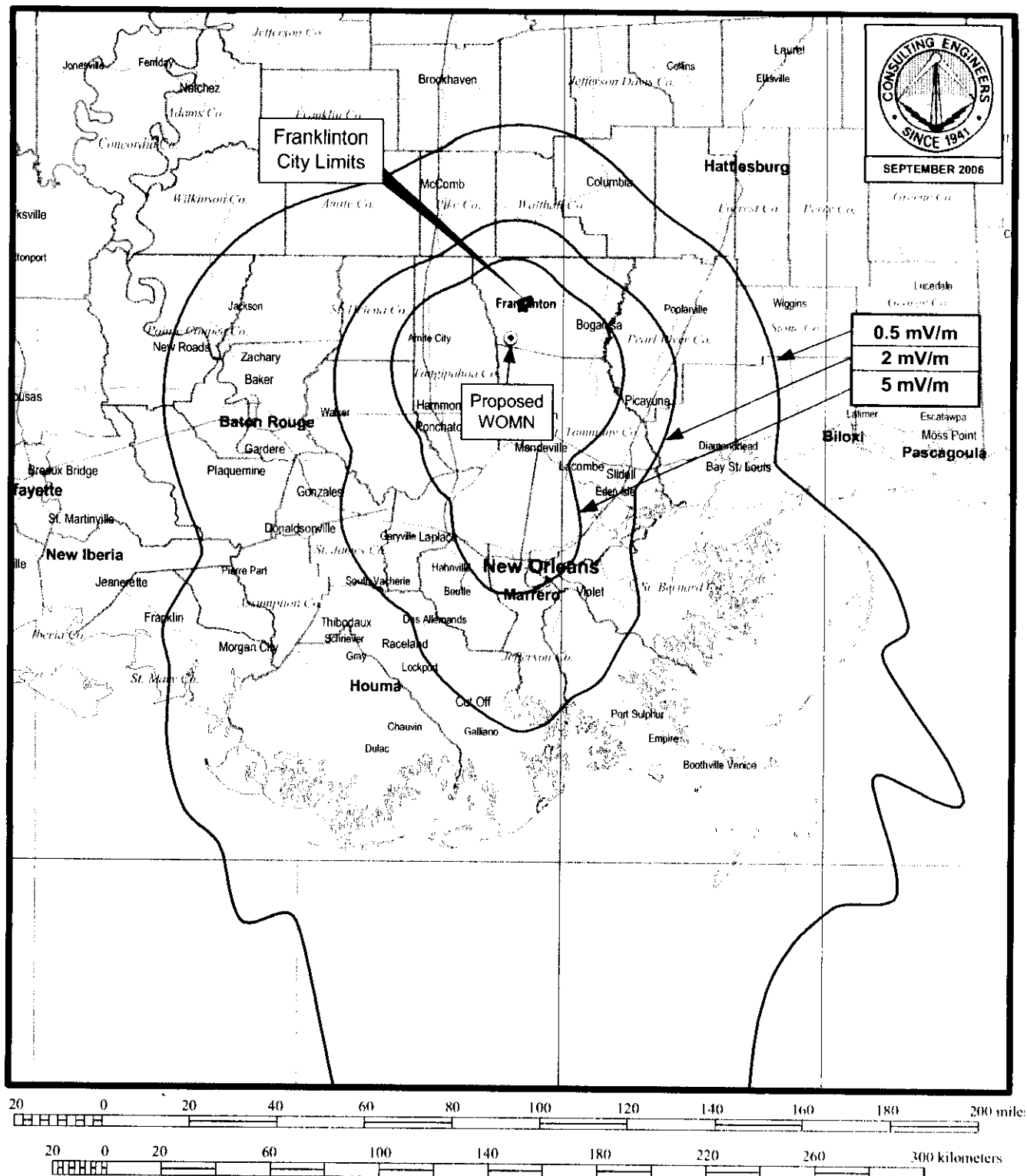
A Lafayette doctor is hoping to build a commercial AM radio station in St. Bernard Parish. Dr. Marcus Pittman, who owns four stations in the Lafayette area and two on the North Shore, hopes to have the station on the air within a year.

"I'd like to give a radio voice to the parish," said Pittman, a family practice physician who formerly practiced medicine in Chalmette. "I think a radio station would be a boost to the citizens of the community."

Pittman said he has been working on the radio project for Chalmette for the past two years, trying to get approval by the Federal Communications Commission and working on getting a tower location. The call letters would be WOMN on 1100 AM, he said.

Formats of Pittman's other stations include a country music station, a gospel music station and talk format, he said. Pittman hasn't decided on a format for the Chalmette station, but is leaning toward talk radio, he said.

Figure8
Sheet 2 of 2



The Times-Picayune

Saturday, September 03, 2005

Tammany radio station providing information

By Charlie Chapple
St. Tammany bureau

St. Tammany Parish President Kevin Davis, wielding emergency powers, has seized a closed radio station near Covington and is using it to relay information about local recovery efforts to parish residents.

Radio station WASO, 730-AM, got on the air late Friday with the help of Covington doctor Marcus L. "Marc" Pittman III, who heads Pittman Broadcasting Services LLC, which owns radio stations in Franklinton and Lafayette.

The station is only disseminating information and is not fielding questions. Plans call for keeping the station on the air "as many hours as possible each day."

Tim Harris of Access St. Tammany, the parish's cable television channel, said Parish Councilman Ken Burkhalter is lining up officials from throughout the parish for nightly programs to update residents about local efforts to recover from Hurricane Katrina.

Davis said he seized the station because of failed communications systems that hampered parish officials from getting information to residents.

The station recently was shut down and taken from Bob Namer by the Federal Trade Commission for non-payment of a legal judgement. The station's studios were in Metairie and its broadcast tower was just west of Covington High School. Pittman, using computer equipment from his radio stations, revived the station in a small building next to the tower. The station's broadcast signal carries throughout the parish.